

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Discursive Legitimation Strategies in Presidential Speeches by Bush, Obama and Trump

Iida Tuohino

Master's Thesis

English Studies

Faculty of Arts

University of Helsinki

September 2020



Tiedekunta – Fakultet – Faculty Humanistinen tiedekunta		Koulutusohjelma – Utbildningsprogram – Degree Programme Englannin kieli ja kirjallisuus
Opintosuunta – Studieriktning – Study Track Englanti		
Tekijä – Författare – Author Iida Tuohino		
Työn nimi – Arbetets titel – Title Discursive Legitimation Strategies in Presidential Speeches by Bush, Obama and Trump		
Työn laji – Arbetets art – Level Maisterintutkielma	Aika – Datum – Month and year Syyskuu 2020	Sivumäärä– Sidoantal – Number of pages 60
<p>Tässä maisterintutkielmassa tarkastellaan kolmea Yhdysvaltojen presidentin pitämää puhetta ja analysoidaan presidenttien käyttämiä diskursiivisia legitimaatiostrategioita ja sitä, miten ne ovat kielellisesti rakentuneet aineistossa. Legitimaatiostrategioiden luokittelun perusteena käytetään Van Leeuwenin viitekehystä legitimoivan kielen analysointiin, mikä sisältää neljä pääkategoriaa: auktoriteettiperustaisen, moraaliperustaisen, rationaalisuusperustaisen ja tarinaperustaisen legitimoinnin. Jokainen Van Leeuwenin määrittelemistä pääluokista sisältää lisäksi useamman alakategorian, jotka pyritään myös tunnistamaan. Van Leeuwenin typologian lisäksi tutkielman laajempänä teoreettisena viitekehystenä toimii kriittinen diskurssianalyysi.</p> <p>Aineisto, jota käytetään presidenttien legitimaation tutkimuksen pohjana, muodostuu kolmesta ulkopoliittikkaa käsittelevästä puheesta, jotka ovat George W. Bushin, Barack Obaman ja Donald Trumpin pitämiä. Puheita yhdistää niiden aihepiiri ja kohdeyleisö: Jokainen presidenteistä perustelee puheessaan Yhdysvaltojen kansalaisille välttämättömyyttä muuttaa toimintaa Lähi-Idän valtiota vastaan ankarammaksi kansallisen turvallisuuden suojaamiseksi joukkotuhoaseiden asettamalta uhalta. Bush käsittelee puheessaan Saddam Husseinin aseistariisumisen välttämättömyyttä, Obama perustelee tarpeellisuutta suorittaa ilmaisku Syyriaan, ja Trump argumentoi aggressiivisemmän Iran-politiikan ja akuutin Iranin ydinasesopimuksen uudelleentarkastelun puolesta. Jokainen presidenteistä pyrkii puheessaan saamaan kansalaiset vakuuttuneeksi epäsuosituksen poliittisen päätöksen tarpeellisuudesta, mikä tarkoittaa aineiston kannalta legitimaatiostrategioiden määrän runsautta.</p> <p>Tutkielman keskeinen löydös oli moraal- ja tarinaperustaisen legitimoinnin päällekkäisyys ja niiden muodostaman kokonaisuuden merkittävyys presidenttien legitimoinnissa: niin Bush, Obama kuin Trump antoivat oikeutuksen Yhdysvaltojen potentiaalisille toimille Irakia, Syyriaa ja Irania vastaan kuvaamalla vahvasti moralisoiden kyseisten valtioiden menneitä tekoja Yhdysvaltoja, omia kansalaisiaan ja/tai muuta maailmaa kohtaan. Obama ja Bush oikeuttivat Yhdysvaltojen toimet myös vetoamalla maan menneen ja tulevan toiminnan moraalisuuteen. Tämä amerikkalainen ekseptionismi taas puuttui Trumpin retoriikasta; hän kuvasi Yhdysvaltojen menneisyyttä neutraalimmin. Rationaalisuusperustaisen legitimaation suhteen presidentit käyttivät useimmiten instrumentaalista legitimointia: Erityisesti toiminnan tavoitteisiin viittaaminen oli yleistä. Auktoriteettiperustaisen legitimoinnin tyypillisin muoto oli enemmistön konformisuuteen viittaaminen: Presidentit esittivät niin kohdemaihin kohdistuvat syytöksensä kuin toimenpide-suosituksensa laajan enemmistön hyväksymiksi.</p> <p>Tutkielma on kvalitatiivinen tapaustutkimus, jonka tekemiä päätelmiä ei voi yleistää aineiston ulkopuolelle: Aineiston suppeudesta johtuen tutkielma ei ota kantaa kysymyksiin presidenttien tyypillisestä legitimaatiostrategioiden käytöstä, eikä sen tekemistä havainnoista voi myöskään tehdä päätelmiä Bushin, Obaman ja Trumpin diskursiivisen legitimaation eroavaisuuksista yleisellä tasolla.</p>		
Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords kriittinen diskurssianalyysi, diskursiivinen legitimaatio, poliittinen diskurssi, poliittinen puhe		
Säilytyspaikka – Förvaringställe – Where deposited Helsingin yliopiston kirjasto		
Muita tietoja – Övriga uppgifter – Additional information		

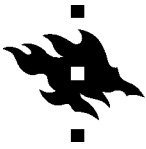
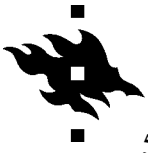


Table of Contents

1 Introduction.....	5
2 Political discourse.....	7
2.1 Political speeches	7
2.2 Presidential speeches in American politics	8
3 Critical discourse analysis and legitimation	9
3.1 Critical discourse analysis.....	9
3.2 Legitimation	11
3.2.1 Past research.....	12
4 Data and methods	15
4.1 The speeches	
4.1.1 President Bush: Speech on Iraq	15
4.1.2 President Obama: Speech on Syria	16
4.1.3 President Trump: Speech on Iran.....	17
4.2 Data selection criteria	18
4.3 Methods of analysis	19
4.3.1 Analytical procedure	20
4.3.2 Analytical framework	20
5 Analysis: use of legitimation strategies in the speeches.....	23
5.1 Legitimizations by Bush	23
5.1.1 Moral evaluation and mythopoesis	23
5.1.2 Rationalization	26
5.1.3 Authorization	28
5.2 Legitimizations by Obama.....	30
5.2.1 Moral evaluation and mythopoesis	30
5.2.2 Rationalization	33
5.2.3 Authorization	35



5.3 Legitimations by Trump	37
5.3.1 Moral evaluation and mythopoesis	37
5.3.2 Rationalization	41
5.3.3 Authorization	42
6 Discussion: comparison of the speeches	44
7 Conclusion	52
References	55

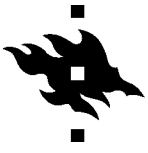


1 Introduction

Political speech is a widely studied topic that was a popular focus of research already in Ancient Greece. Philosophers like Aristotle studied the art of rhetoric, and their work laid the groundwork for what modern political speech would become (Ashley et al., 2015, p. x). Undoubtedly one of the most prominent categories of political speech is the presidential speech. Especially in American political tradition, the presidential speech is an informal but powerful tool that the presidents possess and can use to achieve their goals (Ashley et al., 2015, p. ix). Many past American presidents have given historically significant speeches that are discussed and studied to this day. Famous lines such as “ich bin ein Berliner” or “axis of evil”, immortalized by John F. Kennedy and George W. Bush respectively, are widely known globally. Nowadays, the modern media also ensure that the speeches given by the president of the US are reached by a very large audience faster than ever (Ashley et al., 2015, p. ix).

This study examines presidential addresses by three successive American presidents, George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump. One presidential speech by each president will be analysed with a focus on the discursive legitimation strategies that they use to convince their audience of the justification of (potential) action against another country. The speeches that are analysed in the study are President Bush’s 2003 address on the potential war against Iraq, President Obama’s 2013 speech on a potential retaliatory strike in Syria, and President Trump’s speech on the need to confront the threat posed by Iran and the Iran nuclear agreement. Although the topics of the speeches are evidently different, they are also related on a broader level, as each of the presidents argue for a controversial foreign policy decision related to the US’s activities in the Middle East.

The study takes a qualitative case study approach and adopts critical discourse analysis as its methodological framework. In terms of legitimation, Van Leeuwen’s framework for analysing the language of legitimation (e.g. 2007; 2008) will be used for the analysis and the categorisation of the legitimation strategies. What the study aims to achieve is a description of the presidents’ use of legitimation strategies. Also, the linguistic construction of the presidents’ legitimation strategies will be examined and the presidents’ use of legitimation strategies will be compared to one another to find out the possible similarities and differences. The research questions that guide the analysis of the data are the following:



1. What legitimization strategies do the presidents use?
2. What kind of linguistic choices contribute to the construction of the discursive legitimization strategies used by them?
3. What kind of similarities and differences are there in the presidents' use of discursive legitimization?

The objective of the study is to contribute to the existing research on legitimization strategies in political discourse. Although a wealth of previous research exists on political speeches and legitimization strategies – summary of which will be provided later – they remain relevant research topics: Political actors constantly use language to advance their own case, but many people do not detect the subtle manipulation techniques that are used on them (Ashley et al., 2015). Gaining critical awareness of the way that politicians use language to legitimize their policies, especially controversial one, is thus necessary for any participating citizen in a democratic system.

To begin with, chapter 2 will discuss political discourse: both the genre of political speech in general as well as presidential speech in American context will be introduced. In chapter 3, the methodological framework of the study is laid out: the concepts of “discourse”, “discourse analysis” and “critical discourse analysis” will be defined and discussed. Also, the concept of legitimization will be explained and a summary of past research on it will be provided. Chapter 4 focuses data and the methods: First, each of the presidential speeches will be introduced individually, and information about their background context and future implications will be discussed. Also, both the criteria for the selection of the data and the steps in the analytical procedure will be laid out. Finally, Van Leeuwen's framework and its individual categories will be discussed as well. Chapter 5 entails the analysis of the legitimization strategies in the data: Each of the speeches will be analysed individually. Finally, the differences and similarities between the presidents' legitimization strategies will be discussed in chapter 6, which is then followed by the conclusion of the study in chapter 7.



2 Political discourse

Political discourse can be defined by identifying its participants: politicians – the actors, and the recipients – the public (Van Dijk 1997, pp.12-13). Politicians are the main authors of political discourse: most research on the field of political discourse focuses on texts and speech of professional politicians, such as presidents and prime ministers (Van Dijk, 1997, p. 12). Therefore, in summary, political discourse is a term that includes all the language that is associated with the specific social field of politics (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012, p.81). Consequently, the set of data analysed in the present study is an example of political discourse.

2.1 Political speeches

Political speech is a prominent category of political discourse. Good self-expression is important in the profession of politics, both in written and spoken form: If a politician lacks that skill, she is not likely to be successful in arguing for and convincing others to support her policy propositions. Charteris-Black defines political speech as “a coherent stream of spoken language that is usually prepared for delivery by a speaker to an audience for a purpose on a political occasion” (2014, p. xiii). He divides political speeches into two broad categories based on their function: *policymaking* speeches that deal with the making of political decisions and *consensus-building* speeches that concern with creating a sense of unity and establishing common, shared values (2014, p.xiii). However, these two types of speeches inevitably share many traits, because policy-making speeches need to build consensus in order to advance a specific policy, and consensus-building speeches attempt to establish shared values for a future policy (Charteris-Black, 2014, p. xiv). According to Charteris-Black (2014), the category of a political speech ultimately comes down to its underlying purpose: consensus-building speeches are essentially motivational, whereas policy-making speeches advocate for a specific political decision (2014, p. xiv).

Based on Charteris-Black’s categories, the data of the current study ultimately fit the category of policymaking the best, as Bush advocates for war with Iraq, Obama for an airstrike in Syria and Trump for the renegotiation of the terms and/or future termination of the Iran nuclear deal. However, each of the speeches have some characteristics of consensus-building



- as well: The presidents attempt to convince the American public – partly Congress as well – to support their policy stance and see the enemy country in a negative light.

2.2 Presidential speeches in American politics

The presidential speech is an important subcategory of political speech and the focus of this study. In American politics, speech-giving is an important part of presidential governance: it is a way for presidents to achieve their legislative goals by appealing to the public, even when they cannot rely on the private negotiations with legislators due to divided and gridlocked Congresses (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2010, p.1). The presidential speech is one of the most powerful of the informal powers that the presidents have: It allows them a one-of-a-kind opportunity to promote and shape public policy by getting to address the Congress as well as to talk directly to the public (Ashley et al., 2015, p. ix). By giving speeches, presidents inform others of their policy preferences, address the public in the middle of domestic and international conflicts, and perform their ceremonial duties as heads of state (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2010, p.1).



3 Critical discourse analysis and legitimation

In this chapter, the terms relevant to this study will be presented and defined. First, the basic notions of discourse and discourse analysis will be discussed, before moving on to critical discourse analysis, the theoretical framework of this study. After that, another key concept to the present study, legitimation, will be introduced and explained. Some of the past research will also be summarized.

3.1 Critical discourse analysis

Politics and language are so tightly knit together that they cannot be separated from one another. As stated by Kirvalidze and Samnidze (2016, p.162), “any political idea or action is born, prepared, realized and controlled with the help of language.” Because of this inseparable nature of politics and language, political discourse has been of great interest to the researchers in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (e.g. Chilton 2004; Wodak 1989, 2011, 2009; Fairclough and Fairclough 2012).

In broad terms, the concept of discourse covers all social use of language or language in social contexts (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012, p.78). More specific definitions exist as well, however: For example, one of the common definitions of discourse is, according to Fairclough and Fairclough, “the language associated with a particular social field or practice and a way of construing aspects of the world associated with a particular social perspective” (2012, p.81). This definition of “discourse” is adopted in this study, which concerns itself with the language use in presidential speeches, i.e. within the context of political discourse. The next chapter will discuss political discourse in more detail. In addition to the aforementioned definition of discourse, the study also draws on Fairclough, who points out that discourse does not exclusively refer to texts as ready products, but includes also the entire processes of social interaction around them: the process of production and the process of interpretation, as well as their social conditions (2001, p.20).

Discourse analysis is the subfield of linguistics that focuses on the way that discourses are constructed (Salkie 1995, p. IX). However, as a method, discourse analysis is not utilised only in the field of linguistics: it is applied across various fields to the study of various social



phenomena (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, p. 1). Thus, it is not just a one, single approach to the study of discourses/ texts, but rather a set of interdisciplinary approaches (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, p.1). What separates discourse analysis from critical discourse analysis is the word “critical”: CDA concerns itself with the study and critique of power relations, which means that the analyst has to go beyond the written or oral text, whereas discourse analysis tends to be more focused on just the text, explaining and describing for example its linguistic features or communicative interaction (Le and Short, 2009, p.6-7).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a critical form of social analysis that attempts to provide critique of discourse and explain how discourse relates to other elements of social life (Fairclough, 2018, p. 35). It is approach that seeks to make visible the hidden elements of texts, such as different values and perspectives that underlie them (Paltridge 2012, p.186). As was noted in the previous section in regard to discourse analysis, CDA is similarly not a single, specific approach to the analysis of texts, but rather a heterogenous group of critical approaches developed by different authors (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p. 4). CDA is also interdisciplinary in nature; it does not belong exclusively to one, specific field of study (Le and Short, 2009). It is used as a research method by many different disciplines, such as political science, linguistics and sociology, to study a varied set of topics like globalization or populism, just to mention a few examples. Despite its heterogenous nature, there are some prominent authors, namely Ruth Wodak, Norman Fairclough and Teun Van Dijk, to whose work CDA tends to be linked for the most part (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p.4).

The development of CDA stems from the approach of ‘Critical Linguistics’ that was created by a group of linguists at the University of East Anglia in the 1970s (Machin and Mayr 2012, p. 2). The proponents of Critical Linguistics argued that language is a form of social practice that can be used to promote and naturalise specific ideologies (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p.2). These arguments were later adopted by Critical Discourse Analysis, which went on to extend the work of Critical Linguistics by developing new methods and theory to better capture the underlying ideological currents behind texts (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p.4).

In terms of the components of CDA, Fairclough defines the stages that it encompasses as description, interpretation and explanation (Fairclough 2001, pp.21-22). This corresponds to the previous section’s discussion on his definition for discourse, which includes text as ready product as well as the processes of its production and interpretation, as well as their social conditions. The description stage of CDA refers to the analysis of the text, interpretation



stage entails the analysis of the relationship between the text and the process of production and interpretation, whereas explanation is focused on the relationship between the processes of production and interpretation in relation to the social conditions (Fairclough 2001, pp. 21-22).

One of the objectives of CDA is to find out why language is used in a specific way and what the implications of such use are (Paltridge 2012, p.186). The set of tools that it entails can be applied to the analysis of different kinds of texts and spoken language to reveal the way in which the author or speaker uses language to create meaning (Machin and Mayr 2012, p.1). Also, according to Machin and Mayr, employing CDA can also reveal the ways in which language can be used to “persuade people to think about events in a particular way, sometimes even to seek to manipulate them while at the same time concealing their communicative intentions.” (2012, p. 1)

The criticism that CDA often faces as a methodology is its seemingly subjective nature: its findings are very qualitative and thus the results are not quantifiable. This criticism is not denied by prominent members of the field: for instance, according to Norman Fairclough, the researchers focusing on social matters are always inevitably influenced by their own experiences, values and political views (2001, p.4). He thinks this starting point should be openly acknowledged, but it does not prevent the analyst from conducting proper, scientific research on social matters and investigating their hypotheses rationally (p.4).

3.2 Legitimation

One of the many phenomena that can be studied within the field of Critical Discourse Analysis is *legitimation*. According to Van Leeuwen, the concept of legitimation could be defined as a response to questions, spoken or unspoken, such as “Why should we do this?” and “Why should we do it in this manner?” (2008, p. 106). Legitimation or de-legitimation is always present in some form whenever something is represented in text (Van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999, p.98). However, the importance of legitimation does vary: Some texts include very little legitimation, whereas in other cases (de)legitimations can take up the best part of the text with only minimal references to the practices that are being (de)legitimized (Van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999, p.98). Because of the close connection between political



- legitimization and political power, Critical Discourse Analysis is an effective approach to the analysis of legitimization in political context (Bogain 2017, p.480).

3.2.1 Past research

Because of the close links between language, power and politics, Critical Discourse Analysis is a well-suited method for the study of political discourse and legitimization. Discursive legitimization strategies used in political discourse have been studied in relation to a wide range of topics, such as issues related to economy (e.g. Borriello 2017; Borriello and Crespy 2015; Cozzolino 2020, Fonseca and Ferreira 2015) and migration (e.g. Van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999, Rojo and Van Dijk 1997).

World politics is another important topic in the body of research on political discourse and discursive legitimization. It encompasses issues such as the legitimization of international conflicts and the use of military force. The current study falls into this topic category as well: Each of the presidents use belligerent rhetoric and advocate for aggressive measures against another country. To give an overview of the most relevant previous research on the subject, a selection of past studies on legitimization will be presented next, with a focus on the topic of politicians' war and conflict legitimization.

Van Dijk (2007) studied the discursive realisation of former Spanish Prime Minister Aznar's legitimization of the Iraq war in his parliamentary speeches. In addition to the discursive properties of the texts, Van Dijk studied their political implicatures, i.e. the politically contextual inferences made by the participants in the current, local as well as the more global political situation. Some of the discursive properties that Van Dijk analysed were Aznar's exploitation of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation: Positive self-presentation, as explained by Van Dijk, is a well-known strategy that can be used to paint oneself in a favourable light and to manage other people's perception of oneself (p.71). As to negative other-presentation, it is often used alongside with positive self-representation to form "the well-known social psychology of ingroup-outgroup polarization" (p.75). Van Dijk analysed occurrences of both strategies from Aznar's speeches and discussed their contextual functions as political implicatures.



■ Oddo (2011) and Bogain (2017) examined war legitimization from presidential speeches: Oddo, in his article on war legitimization, examined four “call-to-arms” speeches: two by Franklin D. Roosevelt and two by George W. Bush. By drawing on critical intertextual analysis, he aimed to show that the rhetoric that the two presidents employed to argue for war was very alike, contrary to what is usually believed. The legitimization strategies that Oddo identified from the speeches were the construction of Us/Them binary, temporal legitimization and demarcating group membership. Thus, the presidents legitimized war by creating the opposing categories of “Us” and “Them”: “Us” was represented good and innocent, whereas “Them” was depicted as immoral and evil. Similarly, the presidents represented the past and the future of the two groups a moralized way by representing the past and the future of “Them” in a negative light, and the past and the future of “Us” in the opposite way. In terms of demarcating group membership, the presidents portrayed the category of “Us” as including the entire civilized world, whereas “Them” was represented by them as a marginal minority.

As to Bogain, she examined the presidential speeches of François Hollande, the former president of France. Drawing on CDA, she analysed Hollande’s discourse on “the war on terror” to find out the discursive legitimization strategies that Hollande used to justify the French response to the terrorist attacks that took place in France in 2015. The identified legitimization strategies were classified according to Van Leeuwen’s categories. In terms of the findings, Bogain reported occurrences of all Van Leeuwen’s four categories. In her discussion of Hollande’s legitimization, she also identified similar linguistic strategies as Oddo: For instance, the temporal aspect of legitimization was also discussed by her.

Simonsen (2019) analysed discursive legitimization strategies used by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its public diplomacy. Her objective was to find out the strategies that the Ministry employed to legitimize the three wars between Israel and Hamas between 2008 and 2014. The study drew on CDA and combined with it a quantitative analysis of legitimization strategies. The findings of the study revealed that the most prevalent legitimization strategies that the Israeli Ministry used in their legitimization were moral abstraction and instrumental rationalization. In addition to this, Simonsen also concluded that the Israeli leaders exploited the human shields discourse and the discourse of global war on terror, i.e. they presented enemy civilians as a faceless segment of the enemy military infrastructure that the enemy is ready to sacrifice, and they connected the particular, local war to the large, global conflict between the “good” and the “bad”.



Finally, on topic of the classification of legitimization strategies, Reyes (2011) laid out his own typology of five categories, i.e. emotions, a hypothetical future, rationality, voices of expertise and altruism. According to him, the framework could be applied both on its own and as an extension to other typologies of legitimization strategies. The latter alternative was applied by Pusa (2019) in her study: She used a combination of Reyes' framework and Van Leeuwen's legitimization strategies to analyse and compare the discursive legitimization strategies that Presidents Obama and Trump used to legitimize their decisions to join and withdraw, respectively, from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Pusa reported several differences between the presidents' legitimization efforts, such as Obama's preference for positive legitimization and Trump's more frequent negative delegitimation.



4 Data and methods

This chapter discusses the material and the methods of the study. In terms of the data, the presidential speeches will be presented and the criteria for their selection will be provided. As to, the methods of the analysis, the stages of the analytical procedure will be described and the analytical framework, Van Leeuwen's typology, will be presented along with its different categories.

4.1 The speeches

In this section, each of the three presidential speeches will be discussed individually: The main content of the speeches will be summarized and some historical background behind them will be discussed to provide an idea of their historical context. Also, the future direction of the US' foreign policy after the speeches will be briefly discussed to give an idea of their possible (in)effectiveness.

4.1.1 President Bush: Speech on Iraq

This nationally televised speech was given by President Bush on October 7th, 2002. He spoke from the city of Cincinnati in the state of Ohio. The location of the speech was Cincinnati's historic train station, Union Terminal, which was filled with hundreds of audience members specially invited by the local Republican Party (Wilkinson, 2019).

In his speech, President Bush discussed the imminent threat that Iraq posed to the national security of the US as well as the rest of the world. He expanded on the nature of this threat in detail: For example, he discussed at length of the weapons of mass destruction possessed by Saddam Hussein. In addition to the already existing biological weapons, President Bush discussed Iraq's quest to develop a nuclear weapon and speculated on how far along the country was to get one. Overall, he emphasized the necessity of disarming Saddam Hussein's administration due to the threat that it posed to the US and its allies. This was not the first nor the last time he would talk about Iraq and its threat: according to the Iraq-related archives of President Bush's White House, President Bush had multiple Iraq-related speaking events throughout the entire year 2002, continuing to early 2003, and finally culminating in the start of the Iraq war on March 20th, 2003. The speech Bush gave in Cincinnati took place roughly 6 months before the declaration of war.



■ The timing of the speech was important in other ways as well: it took place one month before the midterm elections and in the same week as a Congress debate on the authorization of military force against Iraq and a U.N. Security Council meeting on its resolution on Iraq (CNN, 2002). Another point about timing was that the speech took place on the anniversary of Afghanistan war, which started on October 7th, 2001 (CNN, 2002).

The backdrop for this and other Iraq related speeches of 2002 was of course the terror attacks that took place on 11th September in 2001. The US response to the attacks led to the US declaring war on Afghanistan and subsequently on Iraq. One of the most famous speeches that Bush gave on the war against terror and Middle East was his State of the Union speech on 29th January, 2002, in which he cited the famous expression ‘axis of evil’ that would become the trademark of his foreign policy (Glass, 2019). In the speech, Bush used the term to refer to Iran, North Korea and Iraq (Glass, 2019).

4.1.2 President Obama: Speech on Syria

President Obama gave this televised speech on September , 10th , 2013 at the White House. He gave the speech on the occasion of a recent chemical attack in Syria, which had taken place in Damascus on August 21st, 2013 (BBC, 2013). There were different estimations of the death toll of the attack, varying from several hundreds to over a thousand victims (BBC 2013). The US, along with its European allies such as France, believed the attack to have been ordered by the Assad government, whereas Syria, as well as Russia, denied this claim (BBC 2013). Obama had already stated his support for the idea of the US’s retaliatory strike in Syria shortly after the chemical attack, but wanted Congress to give its approval to the use of military before giving his official decision (Bissegger, 2013). Despite Obama’s own support of the military strike, the idea was not generally received enthusiastically by either the public or by other politicians (Bissegger, 2013).

In the speech, Obama continued his efforts to rally support for the airstrike: According to him, the US has both the moral duty as well as a national security-based interest to realise the retaliation against Assad. Although most of the speech is dedicated to the advocacy of the airstrike, Obama also discusses his final attempt to pursue diplomacy: Because of this, he asks Congress to postpone the vote on the authorization of the strike to see if a solution could be found through that. Thus, in some respects, the speech’s goal may seem somewhat



- confusing: Obama simultaneously advocates for the necessity of military strike as well as endorses a peaceful solution.

The diplomatic path proved rather successful eventually, leaving the idea of military strike on shelf, and cancelling the need for an imminent vote on the use of military force: Initiated by Russia, an agreement with Syria was forged, according to which Assad turned over his chemical weapons, which gave Obama an opportunity to back away from military action (Everett, 2013). However, one year later, he did authorize another military strike on Syria, did this time against ISIS terrorists and did not seek Congress' authorization for it, as the action was "a necessary counter-terrorism measure" to protect the US (Roberts and Ackerman, 2014). In terms of the USA's action against Assad, Trump finally realised Obama's 2013 proposal two years later by appealing to the same arguments and pretext as him (Associated Press, 2017).

4.1.3 President Trump: Speech on Iran

President Trump gave this televised speech at the White House on 13th October in 2017. The official purpose of the speech was to announce a new strategy and the specific policies related to its execution, crafted as a response to the allegedly increased security threat posed by Iran. However, the speech does not ultimately announce that many concrete nor radical new Iran policies: existing sanctions will be increased, Trump will not certify the nuclear deal anymore and if solutions will not be found to the existing faults of the deal, it will be terminated, which can happen at any moment the President sees appropriate.

The Iran nuclear agreement, whose inherent deficiency Trump lambastes in his speech, was one of Obama's second term's major accomplishments, and was instituted in 2015 with six signatories: the US, the UK, France, Germany, Russia, China and the EU (Al Jazeera 2018). To summarize the content of the agreement, Iran promised to reduce its production of uranium and end its pursuit towards a nuclear weapon in exchange of being freed of international sanctions that barred Iran from trading its oil and gas, among other things (Al Jazeera 2018). The fact that Trump disliked the deal was not unknown: he talked about this already on his presidential primary campaign trail. For example on March 21, 2016 he stated that his "number one priority is to dismantle the disastrous deal with Iran." (Arms Control Association, 2020) In the speech, Trump's opinion had not changed much: He argued that the



■ agreement with Iran was fatally faulty and Iran did not comply with it as promised, thus endangering America's national security. According to Trump, the deal's terms would have to be renegotiated to repair its serious faults. Although Trump did not squash all hope for the survival of the deal, the harsh language he used to portray Iran as well as the nuclear agreement did point to America's withdrawal from the agreement, at least in retrospect. America did indeed withdraw from the deal, which was on 8th May in 2018, about six months after Trump's speech (Al Jazeera, 2018). America's withdrawal has later resulted in multiple further escalations in the US-Iran relationship the decision of the US to kill Iran's General Soleimani and Iran's decision to withdraw from the nuclear deal as well (The Associated Press, 2020)

4.2 Data selection criteria

The presidential speeches that the present study examines necessarily differ from each other in many respects: They have been given by different presidents, in different political and historical eras, as well as on different topics and advocating for different action. The length of the speeches also varies: Bush's speech is the longest with 3350 words, whereas Obama's speech has 2205 words and Trump's 1971 words. This speech-level difference is taken into account in the analysis by giving equal focus to each speech irrespective of their lengths.

Despite the differences between the speeches, each of them meets the criteria that were set for the selection of the data: the broad topic of the speech, the genre and the audience. First, in terms of the topic, all the speeches share the same broad subject matter: all three presidents argue for an aggressive future course of action that the US should take towards an "enemy country" in the Middle East that allegedly poses a national security threat to the US. The threat discussed by each president is related to the enemy's possession and/or use of weapons of mass destruction. Also, due to the controversial action that they promote, the presidents have to employ legitimization strategies to justify the course of action that they advocate for. As to the genre and the audience, all three speeches are nationally televised presidential speeches that have the same target audience, the American people. As discussed in chapter 2, in the context of American politics, the presidential speech is a powerful tool that the President can use to address the public directly, for instance on the occasion of an international conflict, such as the ones discussed by Bush, Obama and Trump in their speeches. As escalating or inciting an international conflict is a controversial idea that is



generally not met with enthusiasm, the legitimization of such policy decision is necessary to shape the public opinion to become favourable to it. Thus, in summary, as all the speeches are given to persuade the public to support a similar and controversial foreign policy decision, the study deemed them as an appropriate set of data for the study of discursive legitimization strategies.

The study recognizes the limitations that are posed by the small size of its data sample: Due to this, none of the findings can be generalized outside the context of this study. However, the small set of data enables a more detailed examination of the legitimization strategies in each of the speeches and the possible differences between the presidents' use of them. It also allows the study to not just provide a list of the legitimization strategies used in the speeches, but also to focus on the their description, i.e. how they linguistically manifest in the speeches. Also, the limited amount of data enables a detailed discussion on the similarities and differences between the presidents' use of legitimization strategies.

On a final note, a short remark on the authorship of the speeches needs to be made:

Nowadays, the speeches given by presidents – and politicians in general – are most often multi-authored texts with the common purpose of legitimating the speech-maker (Charteris-Black, 2011, p. 6). In terms of the data of this study, this is most likely the case as well: It is impossible to know accurately the extent of the presidents' involvement in the writing of the speeches. However, according to Charteris-Black, "Contrary to popular belief, the politician is usually the puppet master pulling the strings rather than the other way around" (2011, p. 6). Also, despite the 'invisible' contribution of speech-writers, the politician is ultimately responsible for the content of the speech, and should thus be considered as its author (Charteris-Black 2011, p.6).

4.3 Methods of analysis

To complement the above discussion on the data and its selection criteria, this section will provide a description of the steps in the analytical procedure that ensued after the data collection. In addition, Van Leeuwen's framework for analysing the language of legitimization, the analytical framework adopted by the study, is presented and discussed.



4.3.1 Analytical procedure

After the collection of the data, the selected speeches were read through to gain an understanding of their structure and content. As the methodology of the study is CDA, the process of analysis was then continued by examining the speeches individually in detail. Also, the small data sample of the study enabled multiple, thorough readings of the speeches. As stated in chapter 3, Fairclough defined CDA as a three-stage-process: it comprises description, interpretation and explanation. This model was followed in the analysis of the data: The speeches were first analysed to identify the legitimization strategies used by the presidents. This was done by examining the speeches for excerpts that would qualify as responses to the invisible question ‘Why should we do this?’. These excerpts of the speech were grouped into the categories of Van Leeuwen’s framework. Next, the legitimization strategies were interpreted from both the presidents’ as well as the audiences’ perspectives. In other words, it was considered what the presidents’ possibly intended to achieve by the legitimization strategies and how the audience might have responded to them. These considerations are based on the contextual information about the speeches (e.g. their background, the future action taken by the presidents, the public’s response to it), discussed in chapters 4 and 6. Also, the larger socio-political context was kept in mind, and the relationship of the interpretations made from the data were reflected to that. After this three-part analysis, the findings were also discussed in relation to one another to compare the legitimization strategies used by the presidents.

4.3.2 Analytical framework

As was previously stated in section 3.2, legitimization can be defined as the answer to the explicit or implicit question ‘Why should we do this like this?’ Social practices can be legitimized and delegitimized on the basis of different typologies. One such typology is created by Van Leeuwen, whose framework for analysing the language of legitimization (2007; 2008) consists of four broad categories that are authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization and mythopoesis. Each of the legitimization strategies is further divided into more specific subcategories. As the current study focuses on the analysis of the presidents’ legitimization strategies, the detailed categories and subcategories of Van Leeuwen’s typology were anticipated to function well as the basis of the strategies’ classification. All the four categories and their different subgroups will be briefly introduced next.



■ Van Leeuwen defines authorization as: “legitimation by reference to the authority of tradition, custom and law, and of persons in whom institutional authority is vested” (Van Leeuwen 2008, p.105). Authorization can be realised through one of six form, which are personal authority, expert authority, role model authority, impersonal authority the authority of tradition and the authority of conformity (2008, pp.106-109). Personal, expert and role model authorities refer to the authorities of people due to their institutional status, expertise or social status as opinion leaders of some sort (pp.106-107) Impersonal authority refers to rules and regulations as the legitimation for social practices: “Because the law says so” (p. 108). The authority of tradition (“Because this is what we always do”) is often employed through words like “tradition” or “practice”, as in Van Leeuwen’s example: “It was the practice for children in infant schools to be given free milk daily” (p.108). Finally, the authority of conformity legitimizes through the answer: “because that’s what everybody else does” (2008, p. 109). According to Van Leeuwen, these legitimations are most often realised through expressing high frequency modality, such as the following example by him: “Many schools now adopt this practice.” (p.109)

Moral evaluation is a legitimation strategy that is based on discourses of moral value (Van Leeuwen 2008, p. 110). According to Van Leeuwen, these discourses are not made explicit, however: they are only alluded to through the use of evaluative adjectives, which according to him, are “the tips of submerged icebergs of moral values” (2008, p.110). In most cases, moral evaluations cannot be in an explicit, linguistic manner: They can merely be “recognized” based on the shared cultural knowledge (p. 110).

Moral evaluation can take three forms, which are evaluation, analogy and abstraction (2008, p.110-112). Evaluation refers to the use of evaluative vocabulary such as “good” or “bad”. In Van Leeuwen’s words, “They communicate both concrete qualities of actions or objects and commend them in terms of some domain of values.” (p. 110) A specific category of moral evaluation is naturalization, which legitimizes by referencing natural order of things instead of moral and cultural orders, such as Van Leeuwen’s example: “Soon Autumn would be here and Mark and Mandy would have to start school.” (p.111) In terms of analogy, the (de)legitimation is realised by comparing a social practice to another activity that is linked with positive values, or, in the case of negative comparison, with negative values (2008, pp. 111-112). Abstraction expresses moral evaluation by referring to a social practice with a “moralizing” term by extracting from it a characteristic that connects it to a discourse of



values (p. 11). One of the examples suggested by Van Leeuwen is the utterance “be involved with the school” in place of “attending parents’ nights” to foreground positive qualities of cooperation and commitment (p. 11).

Rationalization is realized as either instrumental rationalization or theoretical rationalization: the former legitimises by reference to objects, uses and effects of social practice, while the latter legitimises by referencing explicitly the way things are, the natural order of things (2008, p.113). Instrumental rationality can be further divided into categories of goal, means and effect orientation. (pp. 114-115). As their names suggest, goal orientation refers to the purpose of an action, means orientation to an action as a means to an end and effect orientation to the end result of an action (p. 113-115). As to theoretical rationalizations, Van Leeuwen lists its three forms: definition, explanation and prediction (p. 116). Definition refers to legitimation through the definition of one activity in terms of another, moralized activity (p.116). “Transition is necessary stage in the young child’s experience” is an example of definition given by Van Leeuwen (p.116). Explanation legitimizes through the answer “because doing things this way is appropriate to the nature of these actors” (p.116). Predictions, finally, are based on expertise, and can thus be denied by contrary experience, at least theoretically (p.116).

Finally, mythopoesis refers to legitimation through storytelling (p. 117): According to Van Leeuwen, social practice can be legitimized by moral tales and cautionary tales (p. 117). In moral tales, the main character receives his/her happy end by partaking in legitimate activities, whereas in cautionary tales the main character is punished for not abiding by the norms (pp. 117-118).



5 Analysis: use of legitimization strategies in the speeches

In this chapter, the speeches will be analysed by using Van Leeuwen's framework, which was presented in the previous section. The legitimization strategies used by the presidents will be discussed separately in their own sections. These sections are in chronological order: Thus the chapter begins with the analysis of the legitimization strategies of Bush and end with the analysis of Trump's legitimations. A comparison of the presidents' legitimization efforts will be provided in the next chapter. The findings regarding the presidents' legitimization efforts will be compared in the next chapter.

5.1. Bush's legitimations

As discussed in section 4.1.1, the subject matter of Bush's speech was the security threat posed by Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Although Bush did not yet express a direct intention to declare war, he strongly suggested that military action would be needed to quell the danger. Consequently, the purpose of the speech was to convince the American people to accept this course of action by providing justifications for the impending use of military force against Iraq.

5.1.1 Mythopoesis and moral evaluation

The most prevalent legitimization strategies used by Bush were moral evaluation and mythopoesis, which were mostly entangled together in the speech: The stories that Bush used as legitimization for the attack on Iraq were replete with occurrences of moral evaluation. Thus, the two categories of legitimization virtually merged together into one strategy with two complementary dimensions: Whereas mythopoesis gave Bush's legitimization a narrative aspect, the forms of moral evaluation shaped the stories further by adding to them a moralizing function.

The stories that legitimized Bush's plan to attack Iraq were related to the past and future actions of both the US and Iraq. Positive self-representation and negative other-representation were very clear in the stories: As to the US, Bush portrayed the country's past and future in an exclusively favourable manner. His description of the past of the US depicted the country as both a victim of Iraq's crimes and simultaneously as a hero with a track record of virtuous defence of moral values like freedom. Conversely, the portrayal of Iraq's past was fully



■ focused on the evilness of Saddam Hussein and the multiple immoral transgressions of his administration. The drastic difference in Bush's depiction of the US and Iraq's past is highlighted by the excerpts below.

(1) This nation, in world war and in Cold War, has never permitted the brutal and lawless to set history's course. Now, as before, we will secure our nation, protect our freedom, and help others to find freedom of their own.

(2) Iraq's weapons of mass destruction are controlled by a murderous tyrant who has already used chemical weapons to kill thousands of people. This same tyrant has tried to dominate the Middle East, has invaded and brutally occupied a small neighbor, has struck other nations without warning, and holds an unrelenting hostility toward the United States.

In example 1, Bush references the heroic action undertaken by the US in the past wars to prevent "brutal" and "lawless" countries from committing atrocities. By describing these past actions, Bush legitimizes the present day and the future activities of the US: Just as it has done before, the country will continue to protect freedom and help others. Thus, Bush naturalizes the actions of the US: it is normal and natural for it to fulfill the role of the "world police" in order to keep the bad guys in check and protect the freedom-seeking good guys.

As to Bush's portrayal of Iraq's past, as shown by example 2, the country's past is delegitimized through a brief summary of the immoral transgressions committed by Saddam Hussein over the years. His actions are presented in a highly moralized way and delegitimized through evaluation: descriptions such as "murderous tyrant" and "unrelenting hostility" paint a picture of a regime that is not capable or willing to change its morally indefensible ways and will maliciously target the US no matter what. The role of the US is reduced to being in the receiving end of Iraq's hostility. This holds true throughout the speech: The US and the American citizens are frequently foregrounded, along with the Iraqi civilians, as the seemingly passive targets of Iraq's aggressions. Interestingly, Bush also implicitly blames Iraq for the actions committed by terrorist groups presumably affiliated with it. Through this representation, Bush is able to frame the attack as called for in the name of self-defence, as if Iraq had indeed been the first one to attack the US, instead of the other way around.



■ Perhaps the most important aspect of Bush's description of his country's victimhood was his story about the 2001 terror attack, which he referenced three times: roughly at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the speech. The story served as a cautionary tale, which Bush used to remind the audience of the effects that the lack of sufficient vigilance about national security had already had. The story served as an important legitimization of Bush's proposed attack on Iraq: Because of the past terror attack, Bush and the US had a moral justification to be proactive and prevent another tragedy from happening.

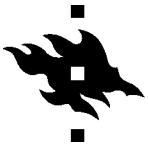
(3) We have experienced the horror of September 11. We have seen that those who hate America are willing to crash airplanes into buildings full of innocent people. Our enemies would be no less willing, in fact they would be eager, to use biological or chemical or a nuclear weapon.

Example 3 illustrates one of Bush's 9/11 references. As discussed before, the blaming of Iraq for the actions of its (presumed) affiliates is present in the example: First, Bush employs an implicit analogy that likens Iraq's potential future actions to al-Qaida's past terror attack against the US. In addition to this delegitimizing comparison, the analogy also suggest an Iraqi contribution to the 9/11 attack, even though it had no involvement in it. However, by creating this connection, Bush was able to present Iraq as a security threat to the US and frame the potential US attack as a defensive act: It has to prevent Iraq from realising its menacing future plans, which Bush confidently states as the use of weapons of mass destruction.

When portraying Iraq's future plans, Bush highlighted the urgency of the situation: According to him, Iraq was dangerously close to committing a "new 9/11" against the US. In terms of the future of the US, Bush's description was the opposite: the country would keep acting in a moral way, just as it had done in the past.

(4) Iraq could decide on any given day to provide a biological or chemical weapon to a terrorist group or individual terrorists. Alliance with terrorists could allow the Iraqi regime to attack America without leaving any fingerprints.

(5) We did not ask for this present challenge, but we accept it. Like other generations of Americans, we will meet the responsibility of defending human liberty against violence



and aggression. By our resolve, we will give strength to others. By our courage, we will give hope to others. And by our actions, we will secure the peace, and lead the world to a better day.

As shown by example 4, Bush described the explosiveness of the situation by claiming that Iraq could realise its plans “on any given day”: This legitimizes Bush’s proposition to attack Iraq: As the disaster can face the US any day, it has an urgent need to avert the catastrophe from happening. The use of the modal verb *could* also enhanced Bush’s depiction of the dangerous uncertainty of the moment, as it implies that even his administration does not have intel about the exact nature of the enemy’s plans. Such expressions of uncertainty and unsteadiness are not present in Bush’s portrayal of the future of the US, however: In example 4, he engages in a moral tale, in which the heroic protagonist will meet its responsibility and overcome all obstacles. Bush uses evaluation to legitimize the actions of the US: It operates on values of ‘courage’ and resolve’ and defends everyone’s rights and liberties, thus working for the benefit of everyone.

5.1.2. Rationalization

Compared to the high frequency of mythopoesis and moral evaluation, rationalization had a less prominent role in Bush’s speech. This was anticipated especially in regards to instrumental rationalizations: As the speech concentrated on justifying the need to attack Iraq, the exact nature of the potential attack – such as its goals or effects – were not yet discussed in great detail. The instrumental rationalizations that Bush did use legitimized the use of military force through appealing to its goals, such as defending peace, and by framing the attack as a necessary step for the victory in the larger war on terror that the US was fighting.

(6) Saddam Hussein must disarm himself, or, for the sake of peace, we will lead a coalition to disarm him.

(7) Some have argued that confronting the threat posed by Iraq could detract from the war against terror. To the contrary, confronting the threat posed by Iraq is crucial to winning the war on terror.



■ In example 6, Bush employs a goal-oriented legitimization to justify the disarming of Saddam Hussein through the noble goal of maintaining peace. Such aspiration is a morally acceptable objective that the audience would not likely have objected. Stating the protection of moral values like peace as the intention behind the activities of the US also fits Bush's portrayal of the country's role as the natural peacekeeper of the world. In addition to the morally sound goal of the confrontation, Bush also moralized the purposeful action of attacking Iraq: He referenced it through the abstraction 'lead a coalition to disarm him', which foregrounds positive aspects of his proposition, such as his presumed international support and the moderate nature of the operation, while backgrounding the practical reality of the operation, i.e. an invasion and a regime change. As to example 7, Bush employed a means-oriented legitimization to connect the activity in Iraq to the larger, ongoing war on terror that he had declared on terrorists after the 9/11. This legitimization strategy coincided with Simonsen (2018), who : argued that the representation of a local, singular war as global is an effective legitimization strategy, as it allows politicians to utilize an already proven method of war legitimization (2018, p. 510). This was indeed done by Bush, who exploited the framework of the War on Terror and presented the confrontation of Iraq as essentially connected to it.

In terms of theoretical rationalization, one example of prediction was found in the speech, which adding to the portrayal of the situation's urgency. As shown by example 8, Bush described the threat posed by Iraq as already grave and only worsening with inevitable due to the imminent danger.

(8) Some ask how urgent this danger is to America and the world. The danger is already significant, and it only grows worse with time.

Bush expresses high modality in the prediction: He uses the present-tense ("is" and "grows") and does not employ any hedges to express doubt or uncertainty. Politicians do not typically express themselves that directly in order to avoid being held accountable later. Thus, to hear Bush seemingly express himself in such direct manner may have convinced the audience to accept his statement as valid and based on his possession of expert knowledge as President and Commander-in-chief.



5.1.3 Legitimation through authorization

In his speech, Bush legitimized the attack on Iraq several times through authorization, most importantly through the categories of expert authority and conformity. In terms of expert authority, it was not self-evident whether Bush's own personal recommendations were based on his status (personal authority) or his expertise (expert authority). According to Van Leeuwen, expert authority legitimation typically comes in the form of a "verbal process clause" or a "mental process clause", and includes an expert recommendation of some kind of the best course of action (2008, p.107). As to personal authority, he describes its typical qualities as the form of a verbal process clause and the presence of obligation modality (2008, p.106). As Bush's statements of his opinions shared more traits with the description of expert authority, they were categorized as such. Example 9 illustrates Bush's legitimation through his own expert authority.

(9) Some have argued we should wait -- and that's an option. In my view, it's the riskiest of all options, because the longer we wait, the stronger and bolder Saddam Hussein will become. We could wait and hope that Saddam does not give weapons to terrorists, or develop a nuclear weapon to blackmail the world. But I'm convinced that is a hope against all evidence.

Bush used his own opinion of the Iraq situation as a legitimation for the need to confront Saddam Hussein: According to him, continuing the status quo of just observing the threat would be the most reckless alternative for the United States, and the hope for a peaceful solution is not realistic. The legitimation is an implicit one, as it is "hidden" behind the conversational tone created by the structures "in my view" and "I'm convinced". They give a personal and sincere touch to the excerpt, and may have thus made the audience more open to accepting Bush's reading of the situation. Bush also relied on the opinions of various other experts to legitimize the seriousness of the security threat. The main body of expert authority he referenced was the United Nations and its weapons inspectors, whose findings and opinions were conveyed to the audience as proof of the existence of a danger related to Iraq's weapons.

In terms of the authority of conformity, Bush references various different actors in order to give the attack on Iraq the appearance of the commonsense position. Often these legitimations were also mixed with expert authority: in example 10, for instance, Bush



■ referenced the United Nations Security Council, an authoritative body of knowledge, whose recommendations related to security threats would likely be esteemed by a large section of the audience. On top of the Security Council, Bush also mentions that both parties of Congress agree with the Security Council on Saddam Hussein and the threat to peace posed by him. As all these important institutions are portrayed as having a consensus on the matter, the audience is implicitly urged to conform and accept the argument too.

(10) Members of Congress of both parties, and members of the United Nations Security Council, agree that Saddam Hussein is a threat to peace and must disarm. We agree that the Iraqi dictator must not be permitted to threaten America and the world with horrible poisons and diseases and gases and atomic weapons.

(11) These steps would also change the nature of the Iraqi regime itself. America hopes the regime will make that choice. Unfortunately, at least so far, we have little reason to expect it. And that's why two administrations – mine and President Clinton's – have stated that regime change in Iraq is the only certain means of removing a great danger to our nation.

Example 11 is another occurrence of Bush's conformity legitimation: He references the administration of the previous president, Bill Clinton, who also shared Bush's conviction of Iraq's security threat to the US and the need to overthrow Saddam Hussein. The excerpt highlights the unanimity that various different actors seemingly have on Iraq: Not only the republican Bush administration, but also the democratic Clinton administration had come to the same conclusion about Iraq, indicating large support regardless of party affiliation. Thus, the audience is expected to be convinced of the legitimacy of the attack: If "everyone" supports it, it has to be justified.



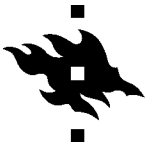
5.2. Obama speech

To summarize the discussion on Obama's speech from section 4.1.2: He advocated for a retaliatory military strike in Syria, due to a recent chemical attack that Assad had allegedly ordered against Syrian civilians. According to Obama, this chemical attack posed a national security threat to the US, on top of which it was a moral duty of the US to respond to such transgression. Obama argued that the strike would be a singular use of military force and would not lead to the participation of the US in the Syrian war. Also, Obama wanted to postpone the vote on the use of military force to pursue diplomacy once more. However, the door to military action was left open for the possibility that it would not work out. Thus, the speech seemed to seek legitimation for the military strike in case that would happen and shape the public opinion for the strike.

5.2.1 Legitimation through mythopoesis and moral evaluation

As with Bush, also Obama's use of mythopoesis and moral evaluation overlapped: the different forms of moral evaluation were most often used inside a story with a legitimizing function. The combination of mythopoesis and moral evaluation had a central role in Obama's efforts to legitimize the military attack to Syria: Through a lengthy story on the chemical attack and its background he casted the US and the Syria in the roles of the hero and the villain, respectively, and thus legitimized the military strike. Moralized storytelling was also used by him to paint a picture of the negative effects of the inaction of the US.

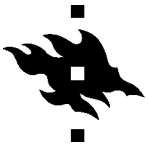
The story on the chemical attack portrayed the US as the hero with a track-record of good deeds and Assad's Syria as the undisputed culprit of the chemical attack and other violations against the Syrian population. The audience was seemingly asked to take these representations as legitimation for the present-day action of the US: as its activities had been moral in the past, the strike to Syria had to be that as well. Similarly, as Assad had engaged in immoral activities, it was justified the hero of story, the US, to avenge for the villain's victims. Also, the story on the chemical attack followed roughly a conventional dramatic structure: exposition, climax and resolution were all present in it. In terms of exposition, Obama summarized the activities that the hero and the villain of the story had engaged in recently: Assad regime had provoked a horrendous civil war in Syria, whereas the US had organised a variety of humanitarian support to ease the crisis.



(12) Over the past two years, what began as a series of peaceful protests against the repressive regime of Bashar al-Assad has turned into a brutal civil war. Over 100,000 people have been killed. Millions have fled the country. In that time, America has worked with allies to provide humanitarian support, to help the moderate opposition, and to shape a political settlement.

In example 12, Obama contrasts the actions of the US and Syria through an analogy: Whereas the former has contributed to the relief of suffering and a peaceful solution to the crisis, the latter has virtually created the crisis, contributing to great suffering of the civilian population. The analogy brings out the seemingly contrasting values that the US and Syria operate on, and therefore legitimizes the US as the morally superior actor. This is also enhanced further by evaluation: Obama describes the Syrian government with the adjective “repressive”, and lists horrible effects that their activities have resulted in for civilians. As to the US, Obama lists positive and moral activities that the country has engaged in. These actions connote positive values, such as cooperation and humanity, and are seemingly taken only for the benefit of the Syrian population.

The evident “climax” of the story was the chemical attack that Assad allegedly ordered against his civilian population: It was described extensively and especially from the point of view of the victims and their agony. When describing the victims, Obama’s language use almost reminded more an excerpt from a novel rather than a political speech. Evaluation was also frequently employed by Obama to delegitimize Assad through highlighting the immorality of his crime: As shown by example 13, Obama gives his moral judgement of the “crime scene” through dramatic word choices “sickening” and “massacre”. The delegitimizing evaluation continues in the description of the victims’ suffering: Obama uses verbs like “lie in rows” and “gasped for breath” to paint a shocking picture of the chemical attack’s impact. Child victims of the attack are foregrounded, which Obama refers to several times throughout the speech, effectively legitimizing Assad as evil. Also, Obama’s detailed, emotional description of human suffering inflicted by him renders the idea of retaliation as morally justified and sets the scene for the presentation of the argument for it later in the speech.



(13) The situation profoundly changed, though, on August 21st, Assad's government gassed to death over a thousand people, including hundreds of children. The images from this massacre are sickening: Men, women, children lying in rows, killed by poison gas. Others foaming at the mouth, gasping for breath. A father clutching his dead children, imploring them to get up and walk.

The resolution of the story came in the form of an insinuation of the idea that the "international community", led by the US, has the moral duty to respond to the chemical attack. The references to international community are made by Obama several times in the forms such as "the world" and "the overwhelming majority of humanity". These references were used by Obama to give his argument legitimation through conformity and to portray the US and the rest of the "civilized world" as united in their horror of Assad's chemical attack. As Obama portrayed the United States as the leader of the "good countries", he was also able to portray the choice to retaliate as an obligation of the country. In example 14, the alternative is implicitly suggested as cowardly: "looking the other way" when faced with "horrificing pictures".

(14) When dictators commit atrocities, they depend upon the world to look the other way until those horrificing pictures fade from memory. But these things happened. The facts cannot be denied. The question now is what the United States of America, and the international community, is prepared to do about it.

(15) My fellow Americans, for nearly seven decades, the United States has been the anchor of global security. This has meant doing more than forging international agreements -- it has meant enforcing them. The burdens of leadership are often heavy, but the world is a better place because we have borne them.

In example 15, the moral obligation of the US to realise the retaliatory strike was further developed by the description of the country's role in the world through the metaphor "anchor of global security". The metaphor is an abstraction that portrays the international activities of the US since the WWII in a moralized way: they have all been intended to defend world peace. Thus, it legitimized the US's international leadership, as without it 'forging' and 'enforcing' international agreements, the whole world would have drifted into chaos.



Through this portrayal, the military strike to Syria is also naturalized as another step in the continuum of international interventions made by the US in the name of peace.

Also, Obama also further moralized the leadership of the US through the description of its leadership position as a ‘heavy burden’: Despite this, the US has carried on selflessly for the benefit and wellbeing of everyone else. By describing the righteous motives behind the United States’ past peacekeeping activities, Obama legitimized his proposed military strike: the audience was enticed to make the reasonable deduction that the strike to Syria had to have virtuous intentions as well.

As illustrated by the previous examples, Obama’s storytelling was mainly focused on the past activities of the US and Syria. However, his speech also included some descriptions of the future. In example 16, he paints a picture of the scenario that would be brought about by the lack of a retaliatory strike from the US.

(16) If we fail to act, the Assad regime will see no reason to stop using chemical weapons. As the ban against these weapons erodes, other tyrants will have no reason to think twice about acquiring poison gas, and using them.

Obama expresses high modality when discussing the effects of the potential inaction of the US (“will see no reason to stop using chemical weapons”): He implies that the lack of action will inevitably lead to Assad’s continuing use of chemical weapons. Obama also ties the impact of not striking Assad to a larger picture of international security threats: it would lead to other “tyrants” being emboldened to use chemical weapons as well. Thus, the moral obligation of the US to prevent this from happening is highlighted even more.

5.2.2 Legitimation through rationalization

Even though the prospective military strike to Syria was primarily legitimized as a moral duty of the US, Obama also employed instrumental and theoretical rationalization to convince his audience of the strike’s legitimacy. Throughout the speech, Obama expressed a clear awareness of his audience’s lack of enthusiasm for prospective military action, which he addressed many times in the speech. Perhaps he had the “sceptics” specifically in mind when employing rationalization: he used it to justify the strike based on its useful purposes and nature as a “limited”, one-off means to achieve these goals.



■ In terms of goal-oriented rationalizations, Obama legitimized the strike through its universally and nationally useful objectives, which Obama articulated explicitly throughout the speech. By listing the goals of the military strike, Obama was able to present it as a clean and simple measure that would be taken to realise these beneficial goals. This is illustrated by the examples below.

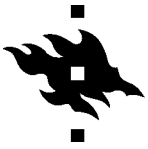
(17) This would be a targeted strike to achieve a clear objective: deterring the use of chemical weapons, and degrading Assad's capabilities.

(18) The purpose of this strike would be to deter Assad from using chemical weapons, to degrade his regime's ability to use them, and to make clear to the world that we will not tolerate their use.

(19) But a targeted strike can make Assad, or any other dictator, think twice before using chemical weapons.

In example 17, Obama describes the potential strike as being "targeted" and having a "clear" objective, which is defined specifically as the prevention of Assad's further use of chemical weapons. By legitimizing the military strike through such reasonable and indisputably justifiable goals of it, Obama urged the audience to accept the idea of the military strike as something that the US should indeed do to bring about these good changes into reality. As to example 18, Obama also mentions the protection of the public image and the international role of the US as another goal of the strike: the world would see that the US does not allow anyone to use chemical weapons. Undoubtedly, some would have perceived this an acceptable, patriotic goal. However, the protection of the US's public image and international role have very little to do with the day-to-day life of regular people. Thus, the legitimization through this goal risks to be inconsequential for the audience. In example 19, Obama used a means-oriented rationalization: it legitimized the military by presenting it as a means to the desirable end: general prevention of further use of chemical weapons. The modality in this legitimization is somewhat lowered; instead of the definite "will", the strike "can" serve this purpose.

As to theoretical rationalizations, the examples below illustrate Obama's legitimization through definition and prediction. He justified the potential strike by describing the true nature of both the chemical attack and the potential strike.



(20) Because what happened to those people -- to those children -- is not only a violation of international law, it's also a danger to our security.

(21) The United States doesn't do pinpricks. Even a limited strike will send a message to Assad that no other nation can deliver.

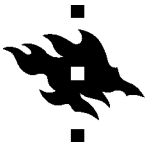
In the definition example 20, Obama also referenced the chemical attack in a moralizing way (“what happened to those people – to those children”) that again focuses the audience on the suffering victims and foregrounds the dead children in specific. The chemical attack is delegitimized through impersonal authority – it is “a violation of international law” – but its value is inferior to the theoretical rationalization that reveals the chemical attack’s “real” nature as a more existential threat to the national security of the US.

In example 21, Obama estimates the effectiveness of the potential strike: According to him, even a limited strike from the US would make a greater impact than anything other countries could achieve, which once again highlights the uniqueness of the US and its moral duty to act. Obama’s prediction is not backed with any further arguments, which leaves it open for questioning by people who have the opposite opinion. However, the audience is urged to take Obama’s word for it and believe his expertise.

5.2.3. Legitimation through authorization

Obama also legitimized the potential military strike through authorization: his speech included occurrences of expert and role model authority, as well as conformity and impersonal authority. The legitimation through Obama’s own personal recommendations were categorized as occurrences of expert authority, which is illustrated by examples 22 and 23. As the examples are both in the form of mental process clauses and entail an endorsement of specific practices, they were categorized as occurrences of expert authority legitimation, even though Obama does refer to his status as Commander-in-Chief in example 23.

(22) I don't think we should remove another dictator with force – we learned from Iraq that doing so makes us responsible for all that comes next. But a targeted strike can make Assad, or any other dictator, think twice before using chemical weapons.



(23) That's my judgement as Commander-in-Chief. But I'm also the President of the world's oldest constitutional democracy. So even though I possess the authority to order military strikes, I believed it was right, in the absence of a direct or imminent threat to our security, to take this debate to Congress.

In both examples 22 and 23, Obama gave his expert recommendation in a hedged manner through the mental processes 'I don't think' and 'I believe', expressing lowered modality. They made the legitimations seem less authoritative and gave the speech an appearance of a casual conversation, which may have made the audience more receptive to Obama's proposition. In terms of impersonal authority legitimation, Obama referred to international law, which Assad had violated by using chemical weapons. As illustrated in the next excerpt, example 24, these legitimations appeared inside the story on the chemical attack, whose unacceptable nature the impersonal legitimation highlighted further: By committing the attack, Assad had broken the "laws of war" and committed a "crime against humanity".

(24) On that terrible night, the world saw in gruesome detail the terrible nature of chemical weapons, and why the overwhelming majority of humanity has declared them off-limits -- a crime against humanity, and a violation of the laws of war.

(25) Moreover, we know the Assad regime was responsible.

In example 24, the impersonal legitimation also combines together with conformity legitimation: the indisputable majority of the world recognizes the use of chemical weapons as such a breach of law and a crime, and thus seemingly agrees with Obama on the need for the retaliatory strike. These representations also contribute to the division between "Us" and "Them": the US and the majority of the world agree on chemical weapons and is horrified by the minority that uses such weapons. Another way that Obama utilised the authority of conformity was by representing the existence of the chemical attack and Assad's culpability as uncontested facts: As illustrated by example 25, this is achieved through the clause "we know", which is repeated several times in the speech. The identity of "we" is vague: Obama may mean his administration, but it can also be thought to refer to the whole "Us"-group, thus legitimizing Obama's claims through conformity.



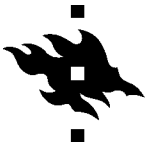
5.3. Trump speech

The subject matter of Trump's speech differs from Bush and Obama in the sense that he did not advocate for the use of military force: Instead, as laid out in section 4.1.3, he announced and presented his new Iran strategy and argued for the urgent need to reform the JCPOA. In order to achieve these purposes, Trump heavily criticized Iran and delegitimized the agreement with them as a dangerous mistake. According to Trump, the deal would have to be drastically renegotiated in order to save it. These reform demands were impossibly difficult, almost impossible to attain by Iran, however. In this sense, Trump's speech reminded Bush's declaration of the requirements that Iraq would have had to fulfil in order to prevent the attack of the US. In addition to the declaration of unrealistic expectations, Bush and Trump speeches are also connected by the timeline of events after them: Bush attacked Iraq about 6 months after the speech and Trump made the official announcement of the US's withdrawal from the JCPOA 6 months after giving the current speech as well. Thus, with the benefit of hindsight, the study treats Trump's speech's purpose as ultimately the legitimization of the US's withdrawal from the nuclear agreement.

5.3.1 Legitimation through mythopoesis and moral evaluation

Mythopoesis and moral evaluation were both used by Trump as legitimization strategies and they often overlapped similarly as in Bush and Obama's speeches. Through moralized stories about the US and Iran's past, Trump legitimized Iran as a suspicious enemy and the US as the long-standing victim of its aggressions, who was naïve to make an agreement with them. These two narratives enabled Trump to establish Iran as an immoral enemy, and the JCPOA as a weak and dangerously disadvantageous deal for the safety of the US. Through these representations, Trump legitimized his arguments that Iran and the JCPOA are problems that need to be confronted.

In terms of Iran, Trump's description of the country's past was lengthy and focused on its transgressions against different victims, who were most often specified as Iranian civilians or the US. In his depiction of Iran's bad deeds over the years, Trump frequently employed evaluation to delegitimize Iran as thoroughly immoral, as illustrated by the examples below.



(26) Iran is under the control of a fanatical regime that seized power in 1979 and forced a proud people to submit to its extremist rule. This radical regime has raided the wealth of one of the world's oldest and most vibrant nations, and spread death, destruction, and chaos all around the globe.

(27) In 1996, the regime directed another bombing of American military housing in Saudi Arabia, murdering 19 Americans in cold blood.

In example 26, Trump describes the regime with dramatic word choices, such as “fanatical” and “extremist”, thus foregrounding the negative qualities like belligerence and zealousness as its defining characteristics. Trump also uses moral abstractions to further delegitimize Iran: the expressions “raid the wealth” and “spread death, destruction, and chaos” present Iran's activities home and abroad in a moralized way, foregrounding the unlawfulness and cruelty of its actions. In example 27, the wrongdoings of Iran against the US are further moralized by evaluative lexis: Iran does not just “kill”, it “murders”, and it does so “in cold blood”. It is also an example of Trump's portrayal of the US as the long-suffering victim of Iran's past transgressions. Interestingly, Trump also presented the actions of Iran's allies and proxies as ultimately of Iran's doing. By listing the aggressions of Iran and its allies against the US and its citizens, Trump foregrounded Iran's active and seemingly powerful role, and backgrounded the agency of the US in the events, reducing its role to being a victim. As Trump provided no context for Iran's attacks against Americans, the underlying presupposition of his story was that they were offensive and unprovoked, highlighting the presumed innocence of the US.

In addition to its victimhood, Trump also discussed the US's dutiful compliance with the JCPOA, which he compared to Iran's lack of compliance: Whereas the US had fulfilled its obligations as promised, Iran had continued its old habits, ignoring the agreement's terms. Trump also criticised his own country for signing the JCPOA in the first place. As shown by example 28, Trump's analogy depicted the US as the morally superior party and thus legitimized his criticism of the JCPOA: as the US had done its part and Iran not, the situation was not sustainable and had to be corrected. As illustrated by example 29, he also legitimized his criticism of the JCPOA through a story about the JCPOA's background, embedded in the broader narrative about the past of the US. In this story, contrary to the rest of the speech, Iran was not represented as the villain, at least the main one. Instead, Trump's critique was



targeted towards the Obama administration that had negotiated the agreement. Apart from example 29, Trump did not name Obama nor explicitly criticized his administration's actions. Nevertheless, Obama was ubiquitous in the story as the "invisible villain" that was ultimately the culprit of the present-day threat faced by Trump administration.

(28) And yet, while the United States adheres to our commitment under the deal, the Iranian regime continues to fuel conflict, terror, and turmoil throughout the Middle East and beyond.

(29) Realizing the gravity of the situation, the United States and the United Nations Security Council sought, over many years, to stop Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons with a wide array of strong economic sanctions. But the previous administration lifted these sanctions, just before what would have been the total collapse of the Iranian regime, through the deeply controversial 2015 nuclear deal with Iran.

In example 29, Trump describes the measures taken by the US and the UN Security Council to quell the Iran threat as having been on the verge of success. However, the Obama administration torpedoed the victory by seeking a diplomatic solution through the JCPOA, which Trump describes as "deeply controversial". The evaluation delegitimizes the agreement as a divisive decision, whose usefulness the American society never reached a consensus on. By portraying the JCPOA, one of Obama's biggest foreign policy accomplishments, as a naïve and harmful decision for the security of the US, Trump legitimized his own foreign policy towards Iran: Unlike Obama, he would protect the US's safety by having a tough attitude towards Iran and dealing with the danger posed by the nuclear agreement with them.

Trump's representation of both the US and Iran's futures was somewhat entangled in the speech: In terms of Iran's future, as shown by example 30, Trump envisioned a scenario that would unfold without the intervention of the US: Iran would likely acquire nuclear weapons and chaos and instability would increase in the world in general. Thus, Trump implies that Iran's future plans are nefarious, even though he does not expand on the matter. Also, he explicitly states in the speech that the past activities of the country already merit the worry for its future plans on its own. In example 31, Trump turns his focus on the future that the actions of the US could lead to: Instead of chaos and terror, in this scenario the future is defined by



positive values such as peace and prosperity. Interestingly, Trump does not discuss this scenario as a certain effect of his foreign policy, but expresses uncertainty of its likelihood to come true. As indicated by the verb “hope”, this is the sincere wish of his, but it is not certain that it will happen. Also, Trump again backgrounds the agency and power of the US through the use of “help” before the verb “bring about”. Thus, he presents the possibilities of the US to solve the problems in the Middle East as limited: The US can contribute to it, but ultimately its possibilities are limited and it cannot achieve the goal alone. The excerpt also revealed that the primary reason for the urgency of action was the security of the US, a harmonious world would be the side product of that.

(30) We will not continue down a path whose predictable conclusion is more violence, more terror, and the very real threat of Iran’s nuclear breakout.

(31) We hope that our action today will help bring about a future of peace, stability, and prosperity in the Middle East – a future where sovereign nations respect each other and their own citizens.

Finally, as example 32 illustrates, Trump also naturalised the idea that the US has to confront all the threats to its national security: If it took no action, the threat would just get worse, resulting in an even greater crisis. Through this, Trump legitimized his plans towards Iran as natural and inevitable, as the threat posed by the country would only be quelled by his tough prescriptions.

(32) As we have seen in North Korea, the longer we ignore a threat, the worse that threat becomes. It is why we are determined that the world’s leading sponsor of terrorism will never obtain nuclear weapons.



5.3.2 Legitimation through rationalization

In terms of Trump's legitimation through rationality, he used mainly instrumental goal-oriented rationalizations to justify his Iran stance: As illustrated by examples 33 and 34, he referenced the moral and useful objectives of the action of the US, which he described in an abstracted and generalized way.

(33) Today I am announcing our strategy, along with several major steps we are taking to confront the Iranian regime's hostile actions and to ensure that Iran never, and I mean never, acquires a nuclear weapon.

(34) First, we will work with our allies to counter the regime's destabilizing activity and support for terrorist proxies in the region.

In example 33, Trump states that the purpose of the new strategy and its specific measures is to confront Iran's hostile behaviour and prevent it from acquiring a nuclear weapon. In example 34, he describes the goal of the US as the opposition of Iran's immoral actions and its support for terrorism. The goals expressed in both examples can be expected to be widely accepted by the audience: it is not likely that anyone would oppose such goals or find them objectionable. Thus, through presenting its' ethical and useful objectives, Trump legitimizes the action against Iran as justified.

As to theoretical rationalizations, Trump also legitimized his Iran stance through referencing his priorities as the President, as shown by the explanation in example 35.

(35) As President of the United States, my highest obligation is to ensure the safety and the security of the American people.

In the example, Trump defines the essential priority of himself, as the President, as the maintenance of the security of the US. Protecting his country and its people is generally regarded as a self-evident characteristic of the work of any legitimate president. For Trump to not have this as his "highest obligation" as well would be seen as absurd. Thus the explanation legitimizes the validity of the measures he wants to take towards Iran: It is his duty to keep the country safe and to do that, a confrontation of the Iran threat is necessary.



5.3.3. Legitimation through authorization

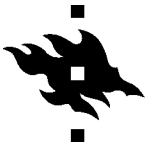
As one of the main arguments laid out by Trump in the speech was Iran's lack of compliance with the nuclear agreement, it was initially expected that frequent occurrences of impersonal authority legitimation would be identified from the speech. However, only some instances of it was detected from Trump's legitimation efforts, which are presented by the examples below.

(36) The Iranian regime has committed multiple violations of the agreement.

(37) Importantly, Iran is not living up to the spirit of the deal.

In example 36, Trump explicitly formulates a claim that Iran has violated the terms of the JCPOA several times. This is a crucial foundation of Trump's delegitimation of the JCPOA as well as Iran in general: As Iran cannot be trusted as a partner, the agreement is clearly futile and fruitless for the interests of the USA. In example 37, Trump delegitimizes Iran and the JCPOA on the same grounds, although in a weaker form: He does not explicitly refer to the terms of the deal, but expresses the idea of Iran's disregard of them. The seemingly contradictory contrast between the two excerpts is interesting: On one hand Trump directly accuses Iran of violating the deal, but on the other hand, he only brings up the vague rebuke of "not living up to the spirit of the deal", making Iran's transgressions appear more like an issue of moral grey area, instead of real, literal breaches of the deal.

In addition to impersonal authority, Trump also employed both personal and expert authority legitimation when justifying his critique of the JCPOA. The two forms of authorization appeared very similar in the speech: as seen below, the only distinction between them is Trump's appeal to his status as the President of the USA in example 38, in which he uses personal authority legitimation. In example 39, he may also reference his status as President, it is not self-evident. The legitimation is nevertheless interpreted as an occurrence of expert authority legitimation, because it is likely that Trump referred to his background as a businessman as the source of authority for his harsh stance towards the JCPOA. Thus, the audience would have been expected to accept the delegitimate nature of the agreement based on Trump's expertise to judge such "transactions".



(38) What is the purpose of a deal that, at best, only delays Iran’s nuclear capability for a short period of time? This, as President of the United States, is unacceptable.

(39) As I have said many times, the Iran Deal was one of the worst and most one-sided transactions of the United States has ever entered into.

Finally, the authority of conformity was also used by Trump to legitimize his doubtful stance on Iran as shared by other countries: In example, 40 he presents the “international community” as agreeing with the suspicions that the US has about Iran and its compliance with the agreement. Even though the reference to conformity is rather vague, it contributes to the impression that Trump’s course of action is supported abroad as well. In example 41, Trump refers to the international community again, this time to delegitimize the JCPOA as a short-sighted decision that would not have been made elsewhere.

(40) Iranian officials and military leaders have repeatedly claimed they will not allow inspectors onto military sites, even though the international community suspects some of those sites were part of Iran’s clandestine nuclear weapons program.

(41) In other countries they think in terms of 100-year intervals, not just a few years at a time.



5 Discussion: Comparison of the speeches

The study initially expected to find frequent use of legitimation strategies from the data, as each of the speeches defended an arguably controversial policy decision that would escalate hostilities with another country. This was discovered to be true: The analysis of the data found that each of the presidents used legitimation strategies frequently in their speeches. Occurrences of all the main categories of Van Leeuwen's framework –authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization and mythopoesis – were found from each of their legitimation efforts. Also, most of the different subcategories of the main groups were present in the speeches.

In terms of the linguistic form of the presidents' legitimation strategies, the analysis found some recurring characteristics: First, each of the presidents used a wealth of adjectives. As expected, the adjectives were the most often used in relation to legitimation through mythopoesis and moral evaluation. In these instances, the adjectives often either strongly condemned the enemy or praised the moral qualities of the US. Some variations of modality were also present in all the speeches. For instance, the deontic modal verb "should" was often used in the speeches, when the presidents discussed the needed action of the US. However, despite the existence of variations in modality, the presidents principally expressed a high degree of modality throughout the speeches: Especially their descriptions of the enemy's actions were frequently uttered in the form of confident statements, making them seem like uncontested facts. Oddo calls these statements "unmodalized": According to him, they typically presume the most authority, "essentially closing off debate on a given topic" (2011, p.297). This quality was frequently identified from the presidents' speeches. Also, the use of the pronouns "we", was another recurring element in the speeches, which often related to the presidents' use of conformity legitimation. This also corresponds with Oddo's discussion on the Us/Them binary.

The most relevant legitimation strategy in each of the speeches was arguably a combination of mythopoesis and moral evaluation: The two legitimation strategies overlapped in the data so frequently that it was easier to analyse them together than individually. Thus, the study took a similar approach as Bogain (2017), who analysed mythopoesis as part of moral evaluation in her study on President Hollande's legitimation strategies. According to her, this was done, because Hollande essentially utilised all the different moral evaluation techniques



through mythopoesis by telling a heavily moralised story about France's past and future to legitimate its present-day actions (2017, p. 490). Temporal legitimization was also discussed by Oddo (2011), who also identified representations of the past and the future as rhetorical strategies that both Bush and Roosevelt used to legitimize war. Thus, the findings of the present study correspond to both Bogain and Oddo's analyses.

Temporal legitimization was used by Bush, Obama and Trump through moralised stories about both the past and the future of the enemy and the US. There were many shared characteristics between the presidents' storytelling in the speeches: The most important similarity was arguably that they all focused principally on the description of the enemy's past, which was portrayed in a detailed and lengthy manner. These stories legitimized the action of the US by establishing the enemy as so immoral and horrible that taking action against them was acceptable and morally justified. The presidents also speculated about the horrible plans that the enemy had for the future, but these representations were less relevant for their legitimization. In contrast, the past behaviour of the US was mostly discussed by the presidents positively, even in a glorifying way. The exception to this was Trump, who in fact discussed the US's past in a negative way: According to him, the US had made a dangerous error of judgement by trusting Iran and getting into the current situation. However, for the most part, positive self-representation and negative other-representation, classical characteristic of war legitimization (e.g. Oddo 2011; Van Dijk 2017) were present in the data.

Despite the similarities on a broad level, there were also some differences in the presidents' storytelling. For instance, in terms of the focus of the representation of the enemy's past. Bush and Trump described the transgressions of Iraq and Iran in a very detailed manner that spanned decades. Especially Trump, who gave the speech in 2017, went all the way back to the 1979's Islamic revolution in his delegitimation of Iran. In other words, his discussion of Iran's former transgressions covered almost a period of 40 years. As to Bush, even though the time period that he focused on was not quite as long, he also referenced Iraq's past activities during the entire past decade. Obama's portrayal of Syria's past differed from this, as his focus was exclusively on recent history and more specifically, mostly on a single immoral incident. This focus allowed him the possibility to paint a much more detailed picture of the incident and really delve into the description of its horrendous nature. As illustrated by examples 42 and 43 from Obama and Trump, this different focus allowed Obama to represent the immorality of Assad from the perspective of the regular people that were victims of the



■ chemical attack: By describing their suffering, Obama is able to use emotionally-charged lexis and appeal to his audience feelings. Trump, in contrast, cannot get to a similarly intimate level, as his wider focus renders the description of Iran's transgressions necessarily more superficial.

(42) The situation profoundly changed, though, on August 21st, Assad's government gassed to death over a thousand people, including hundreds of children. The images from this massacre are sickening: Men, women, children lying in rows, killed by poison gas. Others foaming at the mouth, gasping for breath. A father clutching his dead children, imploring them to get up and walk.

(43) Iran is under the control of a fanatical regime that seized power in 1979 and forced a proud people to submit to its extremist rule. This radical regime has raided the wealth of one of the world's oldest and most vibrant nations, and spread death, destruction, and chaos all around the globe.

In terms of the enemy's future, a sense of uncertainty and worry is expressed by all presidents. It is the strongest in Bush's speech, who frequently discusses the imminent possibility of future dangers. As shown by example 44, his speculations about the future of the enemy tended to be the most detailed: To provide weapons to terrorists is a very clearly articulated worry. Also, the modal verb "could" contributes to the impression of danger: Not even the President himself know how Iraq plans to attack the US. However, the underlying presupposition that it will indeed do something is treated as a fact. In contrast, as shown by the example 45, Trump discusses Iran's future plans much more vaguely: The only description that is given is the adjective "sinister" – the audience member are to make of that what they will. Also, according to Trump, the accurate picture of the future plans of Iran is not even that meaningful to expand on: His summary of Iran's past activities is already enough to merit worry for its future.

(44) Iraq could decide on any given day to provide a biological or chemical weapon to a terrorist group or individual terrorists. Alliance with terrorists could allow the Iraqi regime to attack America without leaving any fingerprints.

(45) Given the regime's murderous past and present, we should not take lightly it's vision for the future.



■ Compared to the storytelling on Iraq, Syria and Iran, the presidents' representation of the US was almost the opposite: Bush and Obama discussed the past and future actions of the US in a glorified way, whereas Trump's approach was rather negative, but in completely differently than in relation to Iran.

(46) This nation, in world war and in Cold War, has never permitted the brutal and lawless to set history's course. Now, as before, we will secure our nation, protect our freedom, and help others to find freedom of their own.

(47) My fellow Americans, for nearly seven decades, The United States has been the anchor of global security. This has meant doing more than forging international agreements – it has means enforcing them. The burdens of leadership are often heavy, but the world is a better place because we have borne them.

(48) We hope that our action today will help bring about a future of peace, stability, and prosperity in the Middle East – a future where sovereign nations respect each other and their own citizens.

In examples 46 and 47, respectively, Bush and Obama depicted the US's actions and qualities as having been uniquely moral in the past and would be so in the future as well. Through this reasoning, they legitimized the present-day action of the US as inevitably moral as well. In contrast, Trump's general depiction of the US was rather negative in the sense of criticizing the US's naivety in having let such security threat as the JCPOA pass. As with Iran's future, his description of the future of the US was also very brief, example 48 representing one of the only occurrences of that. Compared with Bush and Obama, he expressed less certainty of the US's possibility to achieve substantial change in the world. When compared to Bush in example 46, for instance, Trump's choice of verb "hope" suggests a far weaker conviction about the US's action's universal meaning. Bush's modal verb "will" expresses a higher degree of modality and illustrates his confidence in the capability of the US to attain the listed objectives.

Another important aspect in the stories about the US was related to its representation as a victim. This was especially important in Bush's legitimization, who exploited the 9/11 terror attack for the purpose of portraying the US as a target of hostilities. Through this



■ representation, Bush legitimized the action against Iraq as a reasonable precaution to protect the country from experiencing such attacks again. Similarly, Trump also tended to background the agency of the US, and frequently portrayed it as a victim of Iran's aggressions. These representations, as with Bush, served to legitimize Trump's desire to act in protection of the US and thus prevent further transgressions. Interestingly, Obama took a different approach than Bush and Trump: Instead of backgrounding the US's agency, he highlighted it by representing the country as powerful and willing to engage in international operations to achieve its (moral) goals. This difference is highlighted by examples 49 and 50, in which Bush and Obama lay out their differing representations of the agency of the US.

(49) We have experienced the horror of September 11. We have seen that those who hate America are willing to crash airplanes into buildings full of innocent people. Our enemies would be no less willing, in fact they would be eager, to use biological or chemical or a nuclear weapon.

(50) But, when with modest effort and risk, we can stop children from being gassed to death, and thereby make our children safer over the long run, I believe we should act.

In example 49, Bush depicts the US as having been a target of horrendous past transgressions by its foreign enemies. Innocent citizens have lost their lives, as the US was unable to defend itself. Also, Bush reminds the audience that the same enemies are still surrounding the US and waiting "eagerly" to strike it with even worse ways. All this makes it seem as if the US is internationally on a very shaky ground: Enemies can be anywhere and the US is barely succeeding in defending itself. In example 50, Obama describes the international position of the US's very differently: According to him, the US can and should intervene in Syria, and it would not even signify more than a small risk for the country's safety and resources.

Even though its prevalence and significance in the presidents' legitimation efforts was lower than that of the combination of mythopoesis and moral evaluation, the speeches also included important occurrences of rationalization. Bogain's (2017) analysis of Hollande's speeches discussed the "climate of fear" that he created by his "lexis of danger" (p.484). The present study noticed a similar construction of an atmosphere of fear and danger from Bush, Obama and Trump's speeches as well, which was perhaps the most apparent in their use of rationalizations. Examples 51 and 52 are illustrations of the presidents' use of goal-oriented



■ instrumental rationalizations, which they often used to legitimize the action through its security-related objectives.

(51) Saddam Hussein must disarm himself, or, for the sake of peace, we will lead a coalition to disarm him.

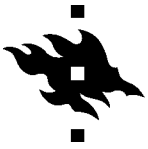
(52) But when, with modest effort and risk, we can stop children from being gassed to death, and thereby make our own children safer over the long run, I believe we should act.

In example 51, Bush moralizes the US's action as well as its purpose through abstraction: Instead of an army, the US would lead "a coalition" against Saddam Hussein, and do this succinctly "for the sake of peace". Similarly, in example 52, Obama refers to "stopping children from being gassed to death" instead of ordering an airstrike against another country. Abstractions like these were used in the speeches to direct the audience's attention to the positive aspects of the action and thus present it in a more favourable light.

Finally, as to the category of authorization, conformity legitimation was found to be its most frequently employed subcategory in each of the speeches. It served to legitimize the presidents' propositions by framing them as accepted by "everyone". This aspect of the presidents' legitimation corresponded with Oddo's analysis: He discussed the creation of the groups "We are the World", the entire civilization, and "They are Fringe", a much smaller but dangerous group, through which the audience, part of the civilized majority, is urged to accept violence as everyone else in the group accepts it too (2011, pp. 303-304). This was clearly done by Bush, Obama and Trump too, which is illustrated by the excerpts below.

(53) Members of Congress of both parties, and members of the United Nations Security Council, agree that Saddam Hussein is a threat to peace and must disarm. We agree that the Iraqi dictator must not be permitted to threaten America and the world with horrible poisons and diseases and gases and atomic weapons.

(54) On that terrible night, the world saw in gruesome detail the terrible nature of chemical weapons, and why the overwhelming majority of humanity has declared them off-limits -- a crime against humanity, and a violation of the laws of war.



(55) Iranian officials and military leaders have repeatedly claimed they will not allow inspectors onto military sites, even though the international community suspects some of those sites were part of Iran's clandestine nuclear weapons program.

In the examples, Bush, Obama and Trump refer to various different entities that are presented as agreeing with the presidents' arguments. Due to this presumed support, the audience is covertly guided to accept the presidents' arguments too. As illustrated by examples, none of the presidents shy away from representing their claims as having the support of very large and significant groups: In example 54, Bush describes his argument having domestic support from both parties and international support from the members of the U.N Security Council. Obama, in example 55, and Trump, in example 56, refer to moral general, but even broader entities: "the world" and "the international community".

Compared to conformity, impersonal authority was a less frequent in the presidents' legitimation efforts. Explicit accusations of Iraq, Iran and Syria breaking rules or laws were made, but they did not play a main role in the presidents' legitimation. As to personal and expert authority, Bush differed from Obama and Trump by legitimizing his plans for Iraq through referencing official experts such as weapons inspectors. However, each of the presidents also used expert authority through their own endorsements of the best course of action. This similarity is illustrated by the examples below.

(56) Some have argued we should wait -- and that's an option. In my view, it's the riskiest of all options, because the longer we wait, the stronger and bolder Saddam Hussein will become. We could wait and hope that Saddam does not give weapons to terrorists, or develop a nuclear weapon to blackmail the world. But I'm convinced that is a hope against all evidence.

(57) That's my judgement as Commander-in-Chief. But I'm also the President of the world's oldest constitutional democracy. So even though I possess the authority to order military strikes, I believed it was right, in the absence of a direct or imminent threat to our security, to take this debate to Congress. (11)



(58) As I have said many times, the Iran Deal was one of the worst and most one-sided transactions of the United States has ever entered into.

The expert authority legitimations of the examples, which somewhat refer to the presidents' institutional status as well, were all expressed in a "soft" form, which was created by the use of the first personal pronoun and the conversational tone adopted by the presidents. This is illustrated the best by example 58, excerpt from Obama's speech: He uses the kind of language that presents him almost as regular person chatting with friends. What contributes to this is his reduced modality: The verbs like "believe", which Obama uses frequently in the speech, present him as amicable and open to different opinions. As to Bush and especially Trump, they express their endorsements with much more certainty. In Trump's case, as shown by example 59, he presents his delegitimizing opinion of the JCPOA without any hedges: Instead, he simply uses the present-tense "is", thus depicting his opinion as a generally accepted fact instead of a subjective view. Bush, in example 57, expresses high modality as well, but "in my view" and "I'm convinced" make it still recognizable as clearly an opinion and thus somewhat open to other viewpoints



6 Conclusion

The study set out to identify the discursive legitimation used by presidents Bush, Obama and Trump in their speeches. Their legitimation efforts were studied in relation to foreign policy-addresses that they gave to persuade the public of the necessity of the US's action towards a Middle Eastern country. In addition to the presidents' individual legitimation, the study also compared Bush, Obama and Trump's legitimation to one another, in order to gain some insight into the possible similarities and differences between their use of discursive legitimation strategies in the data. As the presidents represent different political eras as well as different political orientations – for instance, although no comprehensive definitions, Bush's politics is often called neoconservative (e.g. Schmidt and Williams 2008), whereas Obama's neoliberal (e.g. Elhefnawy, 2019) and Trump's populist (e.g. Rowland 2019) – it was interesting to examine if their legitimation of a controversial foreign policy issue would include some differences as well. The research questions of the study, placed below, were responded to by closely examining the speeches and analysing the presidents' legitimation strategies by applying Van Leeuwen's framework's categories. The study's broad theoretical framework, critical discourse analysis, was drawn on for discussion of the legitimation strategies' linguistic form.

1. What legitimation strategies do the presidents use?
2. What kind of linguistic choices contribute to the construction of the discursive legitimation strategies used by them?
3. What kind of similarities and differences are there in the presidents' use of discursive legitimation?

The objective of the study was to contribute to the body of research on critical discourse analysis and discursive legitimation strategies. Even though the topics of the speeches were different, they can be argued to belong to the same broad topic category: Each of the presidents addressed the public in a rhetorically aggressive way to legitimize a controversial foreign policy decision. The decision in hand was either related to the potentially imminent use of military force or so far still paving the way for the introduction of such escalation. The study found that moralized representation of the enemy's past was an essential requirement of the legitimation of such an issue: It had a principal role in the portrayal of the enemy as a



■ future threat to the US, which thus rendered the present-day “intervention” necessary to quell the threat.

To revisit the discussion in chapter 4 about the political direction of the US after the presidents’ speeches: President Bush was successful in realising the policy decision he advocated for in the speech. Also, before declaring war, he was given the authorization to the use of military force from Congress (The Guardian, 2002) and the unanimous support from the U.N Security Council (Left, 2002). Based on these political wins, it is plausible that Bush’s use of legitimization strategies in the speech could have likely been effective. In terms of Obama, the direction adopted by the US after the speech does not necessarily point out to a particularly successful legitimization of the retaliatory strike. Also, the idea was never very popular (e.g. Pew Research Center, 2013), so legitimizing the strike was always destined to be a difficult task. However, ultimately, both Obama and Congress were luckily spared from making an unpopular decision about the military strike, as diplomacy temporarily dissolved the situation. Finally, as for President Trump, the speculations of the possible efficacy of his legitimization strategies is even harder to envision than with Bush and Obama: He did eventually withdraw the US from the JCPOA, thus presumably achieving his goal of defeating the Iran threat. However, the decision was never met with wide support: For instance, according to a CNN poll, 63 % of Americans opposed the idea (Sparks, 2018), which does not indicate a very successful legitimization of the idea.

As illustrated by the discussion in the previous paragraph, the exact relationship between the presidents’ legitimization strategies and the achievement of their political goals is unclear and beyond the study’s scope. The indications of the present study are purely theoretical: As it focuses on the analysis of legitimization on a discursive level, it cannot give definite answers about the real-life impact that they may have had on the audience. To research this aspects further, another approach would have to be adopted. For instance, Simonsen suggested an audience reception analysis as a way to examine legitimations’ resonance and to corroborate a textual analysis of legitimization (2019, p. 516).

In addition to audience reception, the study cannot make generalizations about the presidents’ typical use of legitimization strategies: As a case study with a small set of data, the analysis focuses exclusively on specific moments in time when the presidents engaged in the legitimization of a policy decision. Therefore, the findings of the study are limited to the level



of the analysed speeches. The future research may wish to focus on an individual president and analyse his legitimization strategies from a more extensive set of data. Future research may also wish to mitigate the subjective nature of CDA by including a quantitative aspect to the research. For example, Berg (2018) strengthened his methodological framework by combining CDA with corpus linguistics.

Two more implications for future research should be mentioned: First, the current study analyzed the speeches from a purely textual perspective, thus ignoring possible visual and auditive cues. To account for them, a multimodal analysis could bring an interesting addition to the existing research. Second, the study noted some limitation related to the use of Van Leeuwen's framework: Although it functioned reasonably well with the data, the speeches included legitimization elements that did not fit the framework's categories fully. Example 59 from Obama's speech, the final excerpt from the data, illustrates this: In the study, the example was categorized into the combined category of mythopoesis and moral evaluation. This decision works reasonably well, as Obama clearly references a system of moral values within a story about the chemical attack. However, the category fails to factor in Obama's effort to emotionally steer his audience and invoke feelings like pity and shock in them, which are also used as a legitimization strategy.

(59) The situation profoundly changed, though, on August 21st, Assad's government gassed to death over a thousand people, including hundreds of children. The images from this massacre are sickening: Men, women, children lying in rows, killed by poison gas. Others foaming at the mouth, gasping for breath. A father clutching his dead children, imploring them to get up and walk.

Consequently, in hindsight, the study concludes that the examination of legitimization strategies may benefit from the use of more than one legitimization typology. For instance, Pusa reported a successful combination of Reyes (2011) and Van Leeuwen's frameworks: The approach prevented the excessive narrowness of the classification that would have risked the categorisation of the legitimization strategies on too weak grounds (2019, p.73). The current study concurs with this and agrees with the suggestion that combining different typologies is a useful solution for future research on discursive legitimization strategies.



References

Primary sources

The White House (President George W. Bush Archives), 2002. President Bush Outlines Iraqi Threat. *The White House*. Available at <<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html>> [Accessed 12 November 2019].

The White House (President Barack Obama Archives), 2013. Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on Syria. *The White House*. Available at: <<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/10/remarks-president-address-nation-syria>> [Accessed 10 November 2019].

The White House, 2017. Remarks by President Trump on Iran Strategy. *The White House*. Available at: <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-iran-strategy/>> [Accessed 15 November 2019].

Secondary sources

Al Jazeera, 2018. Donald Trump declares US withdrawal from Iran nuclear deal. *Al Jazeera*. Available at: <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/05/donald-trump-declares-withdrawal-iran-nuclear-deal-180508141155625.html>> [Accessed 4 March 2020]

Arms Control Association, 2020. Timeline of Nuclear Diplomacy With Iran, *Arms Control Association*. Available at: <<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Timeline-of-Nuclear-Diplomacy-With-Iran>> [Accessed 29 April 2020]

Ashley, J.S. and Jarmer, M., J. ed., 2016. *The bully pulpit, presidential speeches, and the shaping of public policy* [e-book]. Lanham Maryland: Lexington Books.



■ The Associated Press, 2020. Key events leading up to US-Iran confrontation, *The Associated Press*. Available at: <<https://apnews.com/b687c7be0a03c2c6c53397c2f9406f24>> [Accessed 29 April 2020].

The Associated Press, 2017. Timeline of the Syrian civil war and US response. *The Associated Press*. Available at:
<<https://apnews.com/061669c53ab647708ac6cba656dec2d/Timeline-of-the-Syrian-civil-war-and-US-response>> [Accessed 4 March 2020]

BBC, 2013. Syria chemical attack: What we know. *BBC*. Available at:
<<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23927399>> [Accessed 3 March 2020]

Berg, S., 2018. Changing America : Combining Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics to Analyse Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speeches. Master's thesis. Åbo Akademi University. Available at: <<https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/162827>> [Accessed 5 March 2020]

Bisseger, H., 2013. Timeline: How President Obama handled Syria. *The Hill*. Available at:
<<https://thehill.com/policy/international/322283-timeline-of-how-president-obama-handled-syria->> [Accessed 11 January 2020].

Bogain, A., 2017. Security in the name of human rights: the discursive legitimization strategies of the war on terror in France. *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 10(3): pp. 476-500.

Charteris-Black, J., 2011. *Politicians and rhetoric : the persuasive power of metaphor*. 2nd ed [e-book]. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Charteris-Black, J., 2014. *Analysing political speeches: rhetoric, discourse and metaphor*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Chilton, P., Schäffner, C. ed., 2002. *Politics as text and talk: analytic approaches to political discourse* [e-book]. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Pub Co.



■ CNN, 2002. Bush cites Saddam's 'arsenal of terror', *CNN*. Available at:
<<https://edition.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/10/07/bush.iraq/index.html>> [Accessed 12 February 2020]

Elhefnawy, N. 2019. Neoliberalism in a Time of Crisis: A Critical Assessment of the Defining Policies of the Obama Administration. Available at:
<https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3317549> [Accessed 17 June 2020]

Eshbaugh-Soha, M., 2010. The Politics of Presidential Speeches. *Congress & The Presidency*, 37(1): 1-21. Available at:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/249063209_The_Politics_of_Presidential_Speeches
[Accessed 6 December 2019].

Everett, B., 2013. Tough Hill vote on Syria fades. *Politico*. Available at:
<<https://www.politico.com/story/2013/09/congress-syria-vote-096806>> [Accessed 12 February 2020]

Fairclough, N., 2001. *Language and power*. 2nd ed. London: Longman.

Fairclough, I., Fairclough, N., 2012. *Political discourse analysis, a method for advanced students*. London: Routledge

Fairclough, N., 2018. CDA as dialectical reasoning. In: Flowerdew, J. and Richardson J.E. ed., 2018. pp.35-51. *The Routledge handbook of critical discourse studies* [e-book]. London: Routledge.

Ferreira, M., 2019. Vladimir Putin and Foreign Policy, discursive legitimization strategies: A Critical Discourse Analysis Perspective. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Science: Annual Review*. Vol.14(1), pp.1-22

Glass, A., 2002. President Bush cites 'axis of evil'. *Politico*. Available at:
<<https://www.politico.com/story/2019/01/29/bush-axis-of-evil-2002-1127725>> [Accessed 20 January 2020]



The Guardian, 2002. Congress backs Bush on Iraq. *The Guardian*. Available at:
<<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/oct/11/usa.iraq>>

Jørgensen, M. and Phillips, L.J., 2002. *Discourse analysis as theory and method* [e-book].
London: SAGE Publications

Kirvalidze, N.; Samnidze, N., 2016. Political Discourse as a subject of interdisciplinary studies. *Journal of Teaching and Education*. 05(01):161–170. Available at:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319402411_POLITICAL_DISCOURSE_AS_A_SUBJECT_OF_INTERDISCIPLINARY_STUDIES [Accessed 6 December 2019].

Le, T. and Short, M., 2009. *Critical Discourse Analysis : An Interdisciplinary Perspective* (e-book). New York: Nova Science Publishers

Left, S., 2002. UN backs Iraq resolution. *The Guardian*. (Last updated 8 November 2002).
Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/08/iraq.sarahleft>> [Accessed 5 May 2020]

Machin, D. and Mayr, A., 2012. *How to do critical discourse analysis: A multimodal introduction*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Oddo, J., 2011. War legitimization discourse: Representing ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ in four US presidential addresses. *Discourse & Society*. Vol. 22(3): 287–314.

Paltridge, B., 2012. *Discourse analysis*. New York: Continuum Publishing Corporation.

Pew Research Center, 2013. Public Opinion Runs Against Syrian Airstrikes. *Pew Research Center*. Available at: <<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2013/09/03/public-opinion-runs-against-syrian-airstrikes/>> [Accessed 6 May 2020]

Pusa, P. 2019. Discursive Legitimation Strategies in Presidential Statements: A Case Study of the United States and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Master’s thesis. University of Turku. Available at: <<https://www.utupub.fi/handle/10024/147522>> [Accessed 2 June 2020]



Reyes, A., 2011. Strategies of legitimization in political discourse: From words to actions. *Discourse & society*. Vol.22 (6), p.781-807

Roberts, D. and Ackerman, S., 2014. *The Guardian*. Available at:
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/10/obama-speech-authorise-air-strikes-against-isis-syria> [Accessed 5 May 2020]

Rowland, R. 2019. The Populist and Nationalist Roots of Trump's Rhetoric. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*. Volume 22(3), pp. 343-388.

Salkie, R., 1995. *Text and Discourse Analysis* (e-book). London: Routledge.

Simonsen, S., 2019. Discursive legitimization strategies: The evolving legitimization of war in Israeli public diplomacy. *Discourse & Society*. Vol 30.(5), pp. 503–520.

Schmidt. B.C and Michael C. Williams, M.C. 2008. The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War: Neoconservatives Versus Realists. *Security Studies*, 17:2, 191-220. Available at:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09636410802098990> [Accessed 3 July 2020]

Sparks, G. 2018. Majority say US should not withdraw from Iran nuclear agreement. *CNN*. Available at: <<https://edition.cnn.com/2018/05/08/politics/poll-iran-agreement/index.html>> [Accessed 8 June 2020]

Van Dijk, T., 2017. War rhetoric of a little ally: Political implicatures and Aznar's legitimization of the war in Iraq. In: Chouliaraki, L. ed., 2007. *Soft Power of War* (e-book), pp. 61-84. John Benjamins Pub Co.

Van Dijk, T., 1997. What is political discourse analysis? *Belgian Journal of Linguistics*. Vol.11(1), pp.11-52.

Van Leeuwen, T. and Wodak, R., 1999. Legitimizing Immigration Control: A Discourse-Historical Analysis. *Discourse Studies*. Vol.1(1), pp.83-118.



HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

■ Van Leeuwen, T., 2008. *Discourse and practice: new tools for critical discourse analysis*. [e-book]. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wilkinson, H., 2019. The Time George W. Bush Used Cincinnati As A Prop. *Cincinnati Public Radio News*. Available at: <<https://www.wvxu.org/post/time-george-w-bush-used-cincinnati-prop#stream/0>> [Accessed 12 February 2020]